



## ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Bureau of County Transportation

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Bob Riley  
Governor

Joe McInnes  
Transportation Director

March 29, 2007

### MEMORANDUM 2007-09

To: County Engineers

Cc: Division County Transportation Engineers

From:   
Ed Phillips, P.E. State County Transportation Engineer

RE: County Projects by Force Account

After consultation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), it is the understanding of this office that the FHWA will only allow the expenditure of Federal funds on county projects performed under force account when two conditions are met. These two conditions are: (1) the low bid process is not working, meaning that project lettings are only producing a single bidder with bid prices significantly higher than normal; **and**, (2) the county can demonstrate that they can perform the same work at a significant lower cost than that produced through the bid process. Once **both** these conditions are met, the FHWA will consider approving the expenditure of Federal funds on county projects where the work is performed by work account.

The FHWA is now attempting to develop a standardized method for processing force accounts for approval. Force account records are comprised of three separate sections of information. The first is payroll records for labor costs. The second is receipts for material costs. The third is equipment usage worksheets for the costs associated with equipment usage.

It is the adoption of an acceptable source for establishing equipment usage rates that precipitates this memorandum. The FHWA has looked at three sources of information in its effort to identify which one will be adopted as the source for establishing equipment usage rates. The first is the ALDOT "in-house" equipment usage rates established by the Department's Equipment Bureau. The second is the equipment usage rates established by the "Blue Book". The third is equipment usage rates established by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The ALDOT "in-house" equipment usage rates have been rejected by the FHWA because, in their opinion, it lacks information applicable to the counties. The current deliberation is whether the Blue Book or the US Army Corps of Engineers equipment usage rates should be adopted. To obtain the Blue Book equipment usage rates a fee-paid subscription is required. You may access

the US Army Corps of Engineers equipment usage rates on the web by visiting  
[www.usace.army.mil/publications/eng-pamphlets/ep1110-1-8%28vol3%29/toc.htm](http://www.usace.army.mil/publications/eng-pamphlets/ep1110-1-8%28vol3%29/toc.htm).

The FHWA has performed a comparison of the usage rates for some frequently used equipment obtained from the three sources mentioned above. This comparison is attached for your review. A review of the comparison shows that usage rates are somewhat comparable with some usage rates higher in the Blue Book than the US Army Corps of Engineers, while some are lower.

I am soliciting comments from all affected parties concerning this important decision. Should you wish to submit comments concerning which source for establishing equipment usage rates should be adopted, please submit your comments in writing to this office prior to April 15, 2007.

If you should have any questions or comments concerning this matter, please feel free to contact me at (334) 242-6203.

DEP/dep

Pc: Mr. Joe McInnes, Transportation Director  
Mr. Don Vaughn, P.E., Chief Engineer/Deputy Director  
Mr. Don Arkle, P.E., Assistant Chief Engineer, Policy & Planning  
Mr. Ronnie Baldwin, P.E., State Office Engineer  
Mr. Terry McDuffie, P.E., State Construction Engineer  
Mr. Ed Austin, Assistant State County Transportation Engineer  
Mr. Steve Mills, FHWA  
Mr. Buddy Sharpless, ACEA  
File

## Equipment Costs Comparison

<u>Item</u>	<u>ALDOT</u>	<u>Blue Book</u>	<u>COE</u>
Air Compressor, 401/601CFM (ALDOT)	\$16.12/hr	\$9.26/hr	\$19.31/hr
450 CFM (COE)			
450 CFM (Blue Book)			
Loader Backhoe, all sizes (ALDOT)	\$35.54/hr	\$26.31/hr	\$22.34/hr
CAT 446B, 110 hp, 4X2 (COE)			
CAT 446B, 102 hp, 4X2 (Blue Book)			
Front End Loader RT, 2-1/8 -3 YD (ALDOT)	\$34.24/hr	\$22.38/hr	\$29.32/hr
2.5CY (COE)			
2.5CY Case 621D (Blue Book)			
Roller Two Drum, Vibratory (ALDOT)	\$52.45/hr	\$50.90/hr	\$51.47/hr
CAT CB-634D, 145hp (COE)			
CAT CB-634D, (Blue Book)			
Tractor Crawler, Medium (ALDOT)	\$30.88/hr	\$35.19/hr	\$24.06/hr
CAT D4XL (COE)			
CAT D4C XL Series III (Blue Book)			
Trailer Lowboy, 30-40 ton (ALDOT)	\$.38/mile	\$11.74/hr	\$5.31/hr
Trailer, Lowboy, 2 axle, 35 ton (COE)			
Trailer, Lowboy, 2 axle, 35 ton (Blue Book)			
Trailer, Lowboy, 41-50 ton (ALDOT)	\$.43/mile	\$15.35/hr	\$7.43/hr
Trailer, Lowboy, 3 axle, 50 ton (COE)			
Trailer, Lowboy, 3 axle, 50 ton (Blue Book)			
1/2 ton, gas, pickup (ALDOT)	\$.28/mile	\$5.67/hr	\$6.91/hr
1/2 ton, 4X2, conventional truck (COE)			
1/2 ton, 4x2, conventional truck (Blue Book)			
1/2 ton, pickup, 4X4 (ALDOT)	\$.37/mile	\$6.62/mile	\$7.45/hr
1/2 ton, gas, 4X4, conventional truck (COE)			
1/2 ton, gas, 4X4, conventional truck (Blue Book)			
3/4-1 ton, double crew cab, pickup (ALDOT)	\$.52/mile	\$7.56/hr	\$7.57/hr
3/4 ton, crew cab, 4X2, pickup (COE)			
3/4 ton, crew cab, 4x2, pickup (Blue Book)			